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Building a Healthy Community

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2017

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### **Most Klein Residents Feel Prepared for Emergencies**

#### ***Harris County Public Health emergency preparedness survey results from Klein ISD***

**Harris County, Texas** - On Saturday, February 25, 2017, 20 teams of Harris County Public Health (HCPH) staff and volunteers conducted door-to-door surveys asking residents in Klein ISD how well prepared they are for emergencies. The survey, called Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER), assessed the community's level of emergency preparedness. CASPER is a state-based health department model and Klein neighborhoods were randomly selected by a computer using census blocks.

Residents were asked simple questions such as: How prepared do you feel your household is to handle a public health emergency? Do you have a five-day supply of food, medication, and bottled water? If asked to do so, would you evacuate?

Survey results reveal Klein residents feel the three top emergencies most likely to impact their households are: **hurricanes or tropical storms (77%), floods (64%), tornadoes (47%)**. Up to 86% of those surveyed feel at least somewhat prepared to handle an emergency by having a five day supply of non-perishable food (80%), medication (69%) and drinking water (69%). In addition, 89% reported having copies of important documents in a safe place. However, only 46% of the surveyed households had a designated meeting place for family members in case their home or neighborhood is inaccessible after an emergency. Nonetheless, 80% responded they would evacuate if asked to do so.

"Knowing first hand our residents' needs in the event of an emergency helps our public health department better prepare and plan for assistance required, while it also helps residents and families think about how they can become better prepared before an emergency or disaster strikes," said Dr. Umair A. Shah, Executive Director of HCPH.

A CASPER is a large undertaking and requires many community partners, resources and volunteers to make it a success. Klein ISD graciously provided Kleb Intermediate School to serve as the CASPER Command Center, Klein ISD and police department staff participated in the planning and Klein High School students volunteered the day of the event. Also crucial to the planning, communication and implementation of the Klein CASPER were: Harris County Homeland Security Office of Emergency Management, Texas Department of State Health

*HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.*

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Services, Office of Commissioner Precinct Jack Cagle, Harris County Sheriff's Office, Harris County Constables' Office, Precinct 4, Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Medical Reserve Corp, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), student volunteers from the University of Texas School of Public Health and Texas A&M School of Public Health.

For additional information on the Klein ISD emergency preparedness survey results, please visit <http://publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov/About/Organization/OPHPR>.

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